

INDIANAPOLIS HIKING CLUB



John Maxwell photo

Eagle Creek Park, an Indianapolis city park, was one of the Indianapolis Hiking Club's in-state hiking destinations last winter.

The Indianapolis Hiking Club was formed in January 1957 by a group of Hoosiers who liked to hike and work on trail-maintenance projects. In the first year, membership grew to 82 people. By 1968, membership had grown to 165, and in 2016 was up to 571 members, making it one of the largest hiking organizations in the United States.

In a typical week, the club offers 40 hikes. Although spring and fall are the most popular seasons, a full schedule of hikes is offered even in the dead of winter and the warm summer months. Guests are welcome on all hikes.

The hikes are on a variety of terrains and surfaces, with distances ranging from 4 miles to more than 20. Moderate distances and speeds are most common, with hikes typically

5–7 miles at speeds ranging between 3 and 3 ½ miles per hour. Numerous themed hikes throughout Indiana cover topics such as wildflowers, monuments, statues, wall murals, geology, and history.

In the last several years the club has taken out-of-state trips to Tucson, Arizona; Rocky Mountain and Great Smoky Mountains national parks; the Gettysburg battlefield; Los Angeles; and the Ridgeway Trail in England.

During 2016, the club celebrated Indiana's Bicentennial by scheduling hikes in all Hoosier state parks. Participating in the Bicentennial State Park hikes became an event—each one attracted 60–70 members and guests.

No matter where your interests lie, you will almost certainly find a hike on the club schedule that is perfect for you. □

Location: Indianapolis.

Mission/Purpose: To encourage a love of nature through the promotion of outdoor recreation in the form of hikes and outings.

Founded: 1957.

Programs: Multiple daily hikes, at least one hike every day of the year, including Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day. Out-of-state hiking trips of three to 10 days are offered each year. Trail-maintenance hikes, which serve the dual purposes of hiking and helping clear, maintain, and develop trails throughout Indiana.

Events: Social events, including an annual picnic, holiday party, and several getaways outside of central Indiana.

Contact Information:

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Do you think your outdoors-related club should be featured in a future issue? If so, please email information similar to what's above to OI@dnr.IN.gov. If we choose your club, we'll take the photo.